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*New York*

# THEATRE CRITICS'

*Reviews*

# 1943

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†*"Another Love Story" opened Tuesday, October 12th, at the Fulton Theatre.*

**THEATRE CRITICS' REVIEWS IS A COMPLETE GUIDE AND RECORD TO THE NEW YORK SHOWS**

Theater Critics' Reviews brings you the complete reviews as they originally appeared in these New York papers

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NEW YORK POST
NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE
NEW YORK NEWSPAPER "PM"
NEW YORK TIMES
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS
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# "Another Love Story"

**NEW YORK DAILY NEWS**
*October 13, 1943*

## *Parlor Comedy, 'Another Love Story,' Is Funny Now and Then*

**By JOHN CHAPMAN**

IN the beautiful days Joe Cook always had a Fuller Construction Company orchestra, a vast and elaborate mechanism whose sole result was to cause Dave Chasen to hit a triangle. In "Another Love Story" Playwright Frederick Lonsdale has built a complex word structure which has a not dissimilar effect: it causes Mr. Lonsdale to hit three triangles.

The Cook-Chasen opus was funny; so, too, is "Another Love Story"—but only some of the time. The drawing-room sex triangle is quite difficult to master, and I think it was brave of Mr. Lonsdale to try so many. I kept wishing, last night at the Fulton Theatre, that the problems of so many people didn't have to be resolved. When you're writing parlor stuff everybody has to be so brightly grammatical, and being brightly grammatical takes time.

The cast of the comedy is filled with highly attractive and expert people, and the play does have some very funny lines and quite funny situations. Louis Lotito, making his bow as a producer, has provided a smart and attractive setup in the way of scenery and gowns for the ladies.

### Welcome, Roland Young

Gratifyingly, many of the funny moments belong to Roland Young, and anything that brings him back to the theatre should be and is duly thanked. Mr. Young, who says often he wishes he were dead, is beset by two women—one who has seduced him into an engagement he doesn't want; another (his secretary), whom he has seduced and whom he wants to marry. Mr. Young is monstrously woeful—and a wonderfully slick comedian.

Another player from Hollywood is one who has never been on the Broadway stage—Margaret Lindsay. Here, again, thanks are due. She's a very handsome young woman, she has an excellent voice and she possesses savoir-faire. In the play her job is to break up, out of what she fancies is loathing, the new romance of an attractive rascal who once jilted her.

### A Tipsy Butler, Too

Third of the main triangle points is Arthur Margetson, who is suave, intelligent and a great help as an artist who tries, with great casualness, to get his ex-wife to leave her second husband for him.

You might try making up your own plot with this layout. You'll find it involves getting a lot of people on and off stage and a lot of dialogue across the footlights. Mr. Lonsdale's dialogue is sexy in a pure-bred way and punchy when it is short. But all these people in the Williams Browne home—a rich joint somewhere near New York staffed with a tipsy butler—are so well educated they're talky.

To Philip Ober falls the job of being an attractive rascal and he didn't make it for me. Fay Baker and Jayne Cotter are amusing as the two females scrapping over the remains of Mr. Young. Doris Dalton has charm and quiet humor as the ex-wife of Mrs. Margetson, and Fred Irving Lewis, as her stuffed-shirt second spouse, spends the evening taking crude insults from everybody else.

It is often said that Noel Coward, a master at polite comedy, writes a thin little one-act sketch and stretches it into a play. When people say this they are complaining—but I'm beginning to see Mr. Coward's point of view.

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**NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE**
*October 13, 1943*

## *Just Another Love Story*

**By HOWARD BARNES**

FREDERICK LONSDALE'S new comedy, "Another Love Story," has been well served. Sponsored by Joseph P. Kennedy, and performed by such experts at repartee as Roland Young, Margaret Lindsay, Arthur Margetson and Philip Ober, it has lacked neither material nor esthetic support. It must, then, be the author's fault that the new offering at the Fulton is more often a matter for yawns than laughter. He has revived the husk of one of his brittle drawing room comedies, but he has not succeeded in keeping it from being desiccated and remote. The few entertaining interludes in the show are put over in spite of the play itself.

• • •

According to current theatrical fashions, a polite comedy about sacred and profane love, well larded with epigrams, should be a natural on Broadway. Certainly there is nothing in "Another Love Story" to disturb the day-dreaming of the most arrant escapist. It recites the second romance of a gambler and a reckless young woman and embroiders the theme with several lesser love stories. Unfortunately, it is as tedious as it is escapist. Unless Young is on hand to make dull lines funny by the sheer power of his humorous delivery, the piece falls flat on its face.

• • •

The Lonsdale wit flickers very feebly throughout the play. Even his characters lack the stock dimensions which figures in a farce should have. The no-good hero, who evades a trap of his inamorata, only to plunge for love in the end, is grotesque rather than scintillating. His lady, who hates him as much as she loves him, evades sharp dramatic definition in every scene. The minor characters, from the fuddy-duddy banker who is closed in on by two sirens, to an understandably besotted butler, are the only persons you might possibly be interested in at the Fulton. They are not given enough to do to pull the play into some sort of vivid antic pattern.

• • •

Never having seen Young give a bad performance, it was small surprise to me to find him pitching single-handed and triumphantly through the random doings of "Another Love Story." His characterization of a bewildered man of finance, who could only express himself romantically in the more intimate phases of love-making, is a gay and engaging performance. Margetson aids him on occasion with some dry humor and Doris Dalton tries hard to derive some fun out of humorless situations. For that matter, all the members of the company do their level best to make this Lonsdale play a bright and witty play. The author has one and each behind the eight ball.

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**NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM**
*October 13, 1943*

## *Roland Young Droll in Bright Comedy, Another Love Story*

**By BURTON RASCOE**

I HAVE GLAD NEWS for all Roland Young fans. They have at last found a play for our Roland, which not only gives him great scope for his unique talents, but will keep him on view at the Fulton for a long, long time. It is an ingenious and delightful absurdity by Frederick Lonsdale, called Another Love Story, in which Mr. Young is co-starred with that minx of the movies, Margaret Lindsay, and they are supported by a cast that is about perfection.

Even if you worship Mr. Young (as an actor) this side idolatry (which is heathenish of you, if you are so chinchy in your admiration) I still believe you will enjoy the play hugely. If anything now going is worth the money, it is.

It is like every other play by Frederick Lonsdale in some respects. (And what a treat that is, after such a dearth of adroit and sparkling entertainment!) But in other respects it is not. For, in this play, Mr. Lonsdale depends less upon his easy facility in turning out hand-woven paradoxes and petit-point repartee for your delectation than upon his craftsmanship in concocting complicated farcial situations and working them out in a suspenseful, unhackneyed and surprising manner.

### Young Wins the House

Mr. Young tears the house down two minutes after the curtain goes up. I don't refer to the applause which every actor gets on his first entry on an opening night from the fans and from friends, relatives, agents and others who have a proprietary interest in him. I refer to the laugh Mr. Young gets when he walks onto the stage alone. He presents the aspect of misery made animate. He is dejection, walking. And, when he leaves the room, after a moment or so of melancholy self-communion, he is even funnier, seen from the back, than he is seen from the front. That walk of his is an artistic masterpiece.

But that is hardly a starter. When Mr. Young as a meek, diffident, self-effacing junior officer in a bank, painfully confesses that he is in a jam because the girls have finally cornered him, two of whom have stout claims on him, and reveals he had had 11 mistresses besides "numerous trips to Europe" and that it is all because he is "a dull fellow, who has only one means of self-expression" — well, there is hardly a dry eye in the house—from laughter.

### Others Star

All this may give you the impression that Mr. Young is the whole show. He helps it immeasurably, but he isn't. There are some marvelous scenes when Mr. Young is off-stage altogether and his amorous troubles in this comedy of the combat of the hormones are not the whole concern of the play. One of the scenes is played screamingly by Fay Baker and Jayne Cotter. It is a feline duel, with cat-claws flashing, between two women who have seduced Mr. Young and are fighting over the prey. Another is a bedroom scene between Miss Lindsay and Philip Ober, in which Miss Lindsay seeks to humiliate her former lover on the eve of his marriage and is herself humiliated.

It's all quite fantastically complicated, you see. It is preposterous; it's "immoral"; it hasn't a shred of social significance. Mr. Young and his secretary are the only ones in it who earn a living and you gather that they play house, mostly, in his private office at the bank. No such people ever lived or acted or talked the way these people do. But while you watch them you wish they did, occasionally; for they are such fun.

Everything in this confection seems spontaneous and credible; even the poetic speech about what love is, which Miss Lindsay delivers while she runs her fingers over the keys of a piano. By the way, Miss Dalton is a raving, tearing beauty, and Miss Cotter is something for the eyes, too. . . . Luxurious and tasteful settings by Raymond Sovey. A good bet.

# "Another Love Story"

NEW YORK NEWSPAPER PM
*October 13, 1943*

## *About As Sexy As an Ice Cube*

By LOUIS KRONENBERGER

A LONG TIME AGO Frederick Lonsdale wrote amusing drawing-room comedies like *The Last of Mrs. Cheyney*, and Roland Young played in them. Now Mr. Lonsdale has written another, and Mr. Young is playing in it, but it is anything but amusing. Most of it, indeed, is a ghastly bore—labored, long-winded, and full of tired talk about sex and brittle repartees about women. It is hard to believe that anything so smart could seem so stuffy.

Mr. Lonsdale has set his scene in a large country house, and large it needs to be. His characters are far too decadent to travel in pairs; they all pursue sex in trios. There is the hostess, flanked by two of her husbands. There is her bachelor brother, flanked by two of his fiancees. There is another bachelor flanked by a fiancee and a former mistress. These multiple involvements seem a trifle congested for drawing-room comedy, as well as a trifle crude. They have the odor of farce about them; indeed, just to get everybody pleasantly on and off the stage as often as is required, would take the dizziest pacing of a George Abbott. But the pace is as funereal as the scenes are solemnly sophisticated. Carnality has seldom been so purely epigrammatic. Three triangle plots have seldom borne so great a resemblance to a triple bromide. *Another Love Story* is one of those comedies that would be positively brightened up by a little tragedy.

Nor do most of the performers abound in the light touch. Mr. Young, with his faintly shuddering approach to life, continues to be deft and ingratiating; but even he cannot be monumentally helpful when forced to say "I wish to God I were dead" every few minutes. Arthur Margetson manages to hit something like the right note, but Margaret Lindsay is not suited to a highly artificial role, and Philip Ober not only plays the wrong part but is victimized by the way it is written. Mr. Lonsdale, indeed, has made almost all his people work from inside a cake of ice.

### 'ANOTHER LOVE STORY'

"Another Love Story," comedy by Frederick Lonsdale, staged by Mr. Lonsdale; scenery designed by Raymond Sovey; presented at the Fulton Theater, Tuesday, October 12, 1943, by Louis A. Lotito. The cast:

| | |
|---|---|
| George Wayne | Roland Young |
| Mortimer | Henry Mowbray |
| Elsie Williams Browne | Doris Dalton |
| Robert Crayle | Richard Barbee |
| Reginald Williams Browne | Fred Irving Lewis |
| John Asprey | Arthur Margetson |
| Michael Foxx | Philip Ober |
| Molly Asprey | Augusta Dabney |
| Celia Hale | Fay Baker |
| Diana Flynn | Margaret Lindsay |
| Maggie Sykes | Jayne Cotter |

NEW YORK SUN
*October 13, 1943*

## *Mr. Lonsdale's 'Another Love Story' Is a Scanty and Labored Comedy*

By WARD MOREHOUSE

THEY tossed around epigrams last night upon the stage once given over to the delights of "The Last of Mrs. Cheyney" but the results now are not the same. Frederick Lonsdale's new play is called "Another Love Story" and it's a very dull one. It's filled with characters who were forever walking in and out of Broadway drawing rooms in the drama of a quarter of a century ago.

This new comedy by the author of "Aren't We All?" and "Spring Cleaning" has been financed by an ex-ambassador, it is produced by Louis A. Lotito and is played by Roland Young & Co. at the Fulton Theater, only recently vacated by those dear Brewster sisters and all their corpses.

In "Another Love Story" Mr. Lonsdale, who has given faithful service to the theater for three decades and more, throws an odd assortment of people together in the beautiful country home, presumably Long Island, of the Reginald Williams Browne, and concerns himself with complications of love and sex for the better part of an evening. The play is in only two acts. The second is the longer one and most of it seems interminable. There is apparently a rule at the Brownes which provides that no member of the household can enter or leave the room without pausing for epigrammatical identification. Judging by the effect and the impact of the dialogue last night, Mr. Lonsdale is either far off his form or such artificially of speech is not quite so scintillating as it once seemed. Much of the smart talk was faintly reminiscent of "The Importance of Being Earnest" as done by a stock company which hadn't quite recovered from the effects of "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray," given the week before. And Mr. Lonsdale, overlooking no tricks, brings in his butler to make the picture complete.

Wandering in and out of the Brownes's drawing room is Roland Young, whose role is really secondary. But he brings to it, in the moments permitted him, his underplaying, his grimaces and perplexities. Mr. Young, as brother George, who pairs off with his unconquerable secretary just as the misunderstood Michael and the dashing Diana are effecting a reconciliation and planning an elopment, does what he can for his part and the play with his dry, deft and amusing comedy method.

The heroine of this piece is Margaret Lindsay, from out of the films. She has some attractive moments, but it is quite apparent that she can use more stage training. Several parts are quite unhappily played. It is pleasant to report, however, that there are some competent professionals around, such being Phil Ober, Arthur Margetson and Doris Dalton, looking quite charming indeed. She has been unaccountably absent from the local stage for the past few seasons.

Two attractive Sovey settings are used and the production apparently represents a considerable investment on the part of Joseph B. Kennedy, taking a fling in the theater because of his friendship for the author. But "Another Love Story" is a scanty and labored play. It's second-best Lonsdale—if it's that.

"Another Love Story" does not end Roland Young's search for a play.

NEW YORK JOURNAL-AMERICAN
*October 13, 1943*

## *Louis Lotito Presents Roland Young and Margaret Lindsay in New Play*

By ROBERT GARLAND

ACCORDING to the "Drama Critic's Rule-Book," it is both advisable and kind to put off the nasty news until later in the article. "By so doing, the reviewer saves the sensitive feelings of the actors, the director and the producer," it advises with admirable understatement, "and loses nothing himself by his gentlemanly consideration." Okey, "Drama Critic's Rule-Book"! I'll be a gentlemen and see what I can do about it.

Last night, at the Fulton Theatre and in the presence of what used to be known as "a fashionable audience," Roland Young and Margaret Lindsay in "Another Love Story," a "comedy" by Frederick Lonsdale, with such well-known and worthy mummers as Arthur Margetson (remember "Claudia"?) Doris Dalton (remember "The Fabulous Invalid"?) and Philip Ober (remember "Junior Miss"?) among the featured players.

What is more, there were two attractive settings by the Raymond Sovey who can always be depended upon—one depicting a sitting room in the home of Mrs. Williams Browne; the other what programs refers to as "a charmingly appointed bedroom." And, so help me heaven and the "Drama Critic's Rule-Book," that's all I can think of—save, perhaps, the clipped English accents current on the outskirts of New York.

This now being "later in the article," I'm afraid I'll have to break down and tell you that "Another Love Story" was a bit of a bore and a hell of a disappointment. How Frederick Lonsdale — the Frederick Lonsdale of "The Best People," "Aren't We All," "Spring Cleaning" and "The Last of Mrs. Cheney"—ever came to write it, you'll never learn from me. It sounded like the re-revival of a revival.

Out of an artificial and complicated plot, I gathered that an uncertain Mrs. Williams Browne indulged in a couple of country weekends—surely the locale was changed from England to America at the last rehearsal—in which were a wife and her first and second husbands, a youngish lover with seduction on his mind, a lovely lady who is also a double-crosser and an alcoholic butler the like of which Broadway has not lately seen.

And there was talk, talk, talk, most of which was supposed to be witty and nearly all of which was dull. Frederick Lonsdale, known for his bright and brittle dialogue, his worldly wit and wisdom, his caustic point-of-view, was nowhere to be heard and seen around Broadway and 46th Street. It really was a shame. Last night, so much was expected and so little—so very little—materialized.

Roland Young, co-starred with Margaret Lindsay, had practically nothing to do but stroll on to the stage, drop into a chair and exclaim "God, I wish I were dead!"

There were times when he sounded as if he meant it. Margaret Lindsay had more to do, but her heart belonged to Hollywood. Philip Ober, Doris Dalton and Arthur Margetson tried harder than the others. I fear it was Frederick Lonsdale who constantly let them down . . .

Looking back at what I've written, I find that I've been writing about "Another Love Story" in the past tense. "Drama Critic's Rule-Book" or no "Drama Critic's Rule-Book," that's probably what I've been trying so hard to say.